Mr. John F. Norris
7616 Northern Ave.,
Glenn Dale, MD 20769

5/11/92

Dear John,

You are in touch with Hickey's family, I have no desire to intrude upon their privacy so I write them through you because of several developments that may be of interest to them.

Speaking to my lawyer friend who handled my FOIA lawsuits I mentioned Hickey's situation, that lawyers want more front money than he can afford to handle the case. He and I both know a lawyer who would be quite good for it, he much better than I, and he said that when he returns to DC he'll speak to that lawyer. Or, what I am saying, is that it may be possible for the Hickeys to get a good lawyer. My belief is that if they do, St. Martin's would be quite willing to make a settlement that the Hickeys might find satisfactory out of court. I have several reasons for thinking this.

What Donahue and Menninger say about me in their terrible book ranges from twisted and distorted to just plain false. While I cannot and do not pretend to be able to know what was in their minds on this, I believe it is because they were trying to lay a basis for discounting any criticism I might make of the book. There is a reason for this and I think it would be dynamite for the Hickeys and would encourage the publisher not to want any publicity. Remember, I've not read the book but was sent pages referring to me. On one of them they say that the pictures I gave Donahue were of no value. That is false. One that I remember clearly that one I loaned him, and I have his letter with which he returned it, does disprove his cockamanie explanation of the shooting. But more than that, I referred him to the part of the Zapruder film after those frames published by the Commission and I also told him that there is no question about it, the limo did not speed up until after the head shot, or on that basis alone his theory is entirely impossible. There is no problem proving that. I think but after all these years cannot be sure that the Commission's interpretation and that of the FBI is that this is true and obvious to them from that film.

This is to say that Donahue had reason to believe that his theory was impossible yet proceeded with it.

I also remember telling him that proper interpretation of the Altgens picture published by the Commission also proves his theory to be impossible. His interpretation of it is phony.

Now publishers have responsibilities. I've been used by at least three that I can recall as an expert to evaluate a book, three books, that is, so the publisher could know if they were phony. It is clear that St. Martin's made no such effort even though they had to know that the book damaged Hickey. And on that I have proof that they knew, or should have known, that Hickey at the least could be damaged emotionally very much.

Donahue hired a private eye to investigate Hickey. He blabbed. Among the things he said is that they knew Hickey had a severe emotional reaction, had had to retire, and was living like a recluse. Yet Ken McCormick, St. Martin's President, said one of the reasons

The other days I'll be home from my early-morning physical therapy and blood testing by a little after 9 and except for errands that never take much time, will be home the rest of the day unless we go out for early supper, which we probably will at least one day this week.

By the way, if the Hickeys should want to borrow it, I have a super-8 copy of the Zapruder film that is of soso quality but clear on the fact that Donahue's theory is impossible ~~if they would like to borrow~~ it and I have a 16mm version that is of fine quality. It can also be seen by prearrangement with the National Archives and the Secret Service has, unless they've put it in the Archives (as I think Tom Kelley told me they intended to do), a good or better 8mm copy made from the original. It once had two such copies.

If Hickey or his family suspect I have some ulterior motive I've done this kind of thing before because I want only the truth to be told and because this is not the first time someone has abused Secret Service agents without any legitimate basis at all. When William Manchester's book came out and he said the nasty things he did about Greer and Kellerman, I think in late 1966, I asked for time on WTOP, which then had talk shows, to answer Manchester. I was on the Bob Rayford show and did defend those men, who I'd never even spoken to . I also spoke at the Univ. Of Maryland and there also defended them. At the end Roy Kellerman's daughter came up and thanked me. So it can be learned that this is the way I feel and try to do. Some of the Kellerman and/or Greer neihhbors also may remember because some of them phoned me to thank me after I was on the Rayford show.

The former FBI SA I refer to above is sending me some of my books he has to be autorgapher and to get copies he does not have. I never asked him his address but I'll then have it. I'll ask him to give me all the details he has on what he learned about St. Martin withdrawing the book and how he learned it. When I hear from the friend through whom I arranged for the book contract for this former SA, I'll also ask him if he knows anything because he is a lawyer in publishing and might. I think that perhaps the Hickeys might want to know this, I'm certain the lawyer will if they get one, and I think it may also indicate to them the possibility of a settlement they can aceept without anything in public by Hickey, which I think he'd probably not want. But he was treated atrociously and should be compensated to the degree that kind of damage can be undone.

My best to you all,

Harold

Harold Weisberg